



"The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve." (Quran 18:29)

The Purpose of Life

by Khalid Yasin

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This is the text version of the talk delivered by Mr. Khalid Yasin (an American citizen and a convert to Islam) to a group of non-Muslims in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Please take my talk as information and advice and not a lecture. The information that I wish to share may seem a bit extensive, but when you consider the capacity of the human brain and the amount of information it can store and it can decipher, then I am sure that a few pages of information will not over burden you. However, I will ensure that I take the average age here into consideration, so that I don't put you all to sleep.

On one hand, it is my responsibility to address the topic of our discussion this afternoon: What is the purpose of Life? On the other hand, all of you here have an equal responsibility and that responsibility is to listen carefully with an Open Heart and an Open Mind – because if I put a glass upside down and try to pour water into it, I will never get a glass of water. Will I? Hence for me to fill it up, it has to be the right side up. Similarly for our heart and mind to receive some information, knowledge, guidance, wisdom and so on, they have to be open, because once they are close, then neither will we appreciate anything nor will we find anything appealing.

In a world filled with prejudice and cultural conditioning, it is very hard to find people who can take a moment to think about life objectively and try to arrive at the truth about this world and the real purpose of our life.

Unfortunately, when you ask most people this question, what is the purpose of life? They will not tell you what they have concluded through observation and analytical reasoning. In most cases they will simply tell you what someone else said or they will tell you what is commonly presumed by others, what my father said purpose of life is, what the Minister of my Church said purpose of life is, what my teacher said, what my friend said and so on.

If I ask any of you what the purpose of eating is, i.e. why do we eat? In one word or another, everyone will say, well it is for nutrition, because nutrition sustains life.

If I ask anyone why they work, they will say because it is a necessity in order to support themselves and provide the needs of their families.

If I ask anyone why they sleep, why they wash, why they dress etc, they will answer this is a common necessity for all human beings.

Hundreds of similar other questions could be asked and we will receive the same or similar answers from anyone in any language in any place in the world. Simple.

Then I ask you the question, why is it that when we ask the question what is the goal and purpose of life, we receive so many different answers? It is because people are confused, they are stumbling in the dark and don't really know. Rather than to say, they don't know, they just answer any answer which they have been programmed to answer. Please think about it.

Is our purpose in this world, simply to eat, sleep, dress, work, acquire some material gains and enjoy ourselves? Is it our purpose?

Why are we born? What is the object of our existence and what is the wisdom behind the creation of man and this tremendous universe? Think about that question.

Some persons argue that there is no proof of any Divine Origin, there is no proof that there is a God, there is no proof that this Universe has come about through any divine purpose. There are people who argue about that. And they say that perhaps this world came about by chance. A big bang and the whole great world with all its orchestration just came together. They argue that life doesn't have any definite purpose. That there is nothing that can be proven through either logic or science that there is a God or purpose or any divine reason behind this world.

Here I would like to mention few verses from the Quran that address the subject. I will first recite the verses in Arabic and will then give the English translation.

AU-DHU-BIL-LA-HI MINASH-SHAITANIR RAJIM

Wa lillahi mulkus-samaawaati wal ardh: wallahu alaa kulli shay in-Qadiir

Inna fi khal-qis-samaawaati wal-ardhi wakh-tilaafil-layli wan-nahaari la-Aayaatilli-ulil-albaab

Allaziina yaz-kuruunal-laaha qiyaamanw-wa qu-uudanw-wa alaa junuubihim wa yatafakkaruuna fi khal-qis samaawaati wal-ardh: rabbanaa maa khalaqta haazaa baatilaa! Sub-haanaka faqinaa azaaban-naar!

Chapter 3, Verses 189-191

I seek refuge in Allah from the Satan the cursed, the rejected.

In these verses Allah says:

To Allah belongs the dominion of the heaven and the earth, and Allah has power over all things.

Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.

Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted are You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.

Now, here in these verses, Allah has mentioned very clearly to us, by first drawing our attention to the creation of ourselves, the different postures of the human body, the different attitudes of the human psychology. He draws our attention to the heavens, the alternation of the day and the night, the stars, the constellations. And then he says to us, he has not created all of these for any foolish purpose, because when we see the design of it, we know that the design of it is very powerful and very precise. Something very powerful and precise, that is beyond our imagination and beyond our own calculation, cannot be foolish.

For instance, if you took 10 marbles of different colours and numbered them 1 to 10. If you put them in a bag and shook the bag and then closing your eyes, reached inside that bag and I tell you to pullout marble no. 1, then pullout marble no. 2, and then pullout marble no. 3 in order. What is

the chance of you pulling out those marbles in order? Do you know what the chances are? 26 million to 1. So what are the chances of heaven/earth, been thrown in the big bang and are orchestrated like they are? What is the chance of that?

Dear respected elders, we have to ask ourselves a further question, when you see a bridge, building or an automobile, you automatically consider the person who constructed it. When you see an airplane, rocket, satellite or a large ship, you automatically consider how incredible vehicle it is. When you see a nuclear plant or a space ship, you will have to be thoroughly impressed with the engineering dynamics involved. Yet, these are things that are manufactured by human beings. Then what about the human body with its massive and intricate control system? Think about it.

Think about the human brain - how it thinks, how it stores and retrieves information, how it analyses, how it distinguishes and characterizes information in a millionth of a second and does it constantly. This is the brain that made the automobiles, space ship and so on, but who made the brain? Think about that.

Think about the heart – how it pumps continuously for 60 to 70 years, in taking and discharging blood throughout the body and maintains that steady position throughout the life of that person.

Think about the kidneys – what kind of function do they carry. It purifies instruments of the body, which performs hundreds of chemical analysis simultaneously and also controls the level of toxicity in the content of the body and it does this automatically.

Think about your eyes - the human camera, that adjusts, focuses, interprets, evaluates, applies colour automatically. The natural reception and adjustment to light and distance is automatic. Think about it.

Who created all of these? Who mastered all of these? Who plans and regulates all of these? Human beings themselves? No, of course not.

We have just seen that each and every part of our body is created by Allah – The Almighty, and all the parts of our body are constantly following the laws of Allah. In other words all the parts of our body are constantly submitting to the will of Allah. And everything that submits to the will of Allah is a Muslim. Yes, you don't have to relate the word Muslim to Arabs or Middle-East only, every being or thing that submits to the will of Allah is a Muslim. That is what the definition of the word Muslim is. So, whether you like it or not and whether you accept it or not, each and every part of your body is a Muslim. If someone here doesn't agree with this, they can let me know to whose will are the parts of your body submitting? If it is your will, can someone prove it to me please, can you ask your eyes to hear and ears to see or can you ask your nose to taste and tongue to smell. Can anyone do that? No you can't.

What about this Universe? Think about this. This earth is one planet in the Solar system and our solar system is one of the systems in the milky way and the milky way is one of the constellations in that Galaxy. There are millions of Galaxies like that Milky Way. And they are all in order, they are all precise, they are not colliding with each other, they are not conflicting with each other and they are all swimming along in an orbit that has been set for them. Has human beings set that into motion and are human beings maintaining that position? No of course not.

I am sure now you know how vast the Universe is, because some people don't know. Few days ago, I watched President Bush on T.V. saying that he has 'Universal Approval' for his mission. I was shocked when I heard that and asked myself, does he really know what the Universe is? When you compare the planet Earth with the Universe, the Earth won't even be .01% of the Universe, so I have no idea what President Bush was talking about. I say this because we have to be very careful when we talk about something that is beyond our limitation. This reminds me of another incident, many years ago when America wanted to send a rocket or a space toy into space. I say space toy because I don't know what exactly they are used for, because if one of their functions is spying/sensing, then what were they doing when New York and Washington were attacked. Anyway, they wanted to send something into space and they named it Challenger. There are people in this world who think and ponder, so if you think about the name Challenger, a question arises – Whom are you going to challenge? Are you going to challenge the Divine Being or His creation or what? Eventually, when the challenger went up, it was blown away and since then they have never used that name again. If anyone here has connections to President Bush, please pass on this to him. I am a common person; I don't have connections at that level, you see.

Think about the Oceans, the fish, the insects, the birds, the plants, bacteria, the chemical elements – which have not been discovered and cannot be detected even with the most sophisticated instruments, yet each one has a law that they follow. Did all of these – synchronization, harmony, variation, design, maintenance, operation and infinite numeration, they just happened by chance. Also, do these things function perfectly and perpetually – also by chance? Do they keep on reproducing themselves and maintaining themselves – also by chance? No of course not.

It is totally illogical and foolish to think and in the least, it would indicate that however it came to be, it is totally outside of our own capability. We will all agree to that.

The Being, the Almighty Power, God, the Creator, Who has knowledge to design, to proportion, Who has created all of these and is responsible for the maintenance of all of these; is the only ONE deserving of Praise and Gratitude. If I gave each one of you \$100 for no special reason, but just for coming here, you would at least say thank you. So what the gifts in the form of your eyes, your kidneys, your brain, your life, your breath, your children. What about that? Who gave you that? Is He not worthy of Praise and Thanks? Is He not worthy of your Worship and your recognition? My respected elders, that in a nutshell is the purpose and goal of our life.

Allah (the Glorified and Exalted) said to us in the Quran:

Wa maa khalaqtul-Jinna wal-insa illaa liya-buduun. Chapter 51, Verse 56

And I created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me.

This is what the Almighty said.

So in my conclusion, our purpose in life is to recognize our Creator, to be grateful to our Creator, to worship the Creator, to surrender ourselves to our Creator and to obey the laws that He has determined for us. In a nutshell it means Worship. This is our purpose in this life and whatever we do in the cause of this worship i.e. the system - eating, drinking, working, dressing, sleeping, the

enjoin between life and death, all of these are just consequential, but we have been created for Worship, that is the purpose of our life.

I don't think that anyone who is scientific or analytical will have much argument with that purpose. They might have some alternate purpose within themselves, but that is something they will have to deal with, within themselves and Almighty God.

Meanings:

Stereotype: An over-generalized idea, impression, or point of view allowing for no individuality or variation.

Rancour: a long-lasting feeling of bitterness , dislike or hatred.

Intricate: Full of complicated, interrelated, or tangled details or parts and therefore difficult to understand, analyze, or sort out.

Toxicity: 1. The degree to which a substance is poisonous. 2. The state of being poisonous.

References:

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